

Sacrilege a Snare. *Levit.*

se. gen. 47

A
SERMON
PREACHED,
AD CLERUM,

In the *Univerſity of Cambridg*, by the
R. REVEREND FATHER IN GOD
Lancelot Andrews :

Late L. BISHOP of WINCHESTER,
VVhen he proceeded Doctor in Divinity.

Translated for the benefit of the Publike.

*Will a man rob GOD? yet ye have robbed me: But ye ſay,
wherein have we robbed thee? In Tithes and Offerings.*

*Ye are curſed with a curſe; for ye have robbed me, even this whole
Nation. mala: 3: 8. 9.*

*Bring ye all the Tithes into the Store-Houſe, that there may be
meat in mine houſe, and prove me now herewith, ſaith the
Lord of Hoſts, if I will not open you the windowes of Hea-
ven, and poure you out a bleſſing, that there ſhall not be room
enough to receive it. P. Malachy 3. chap. 8. 9, 10. v.*

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Sacrilege a Snare.

PROV. XX. XXV.

*It is a snare to the Man who devoureth
that which is HOLY.*



IT is commonly received, among Divines, that *The Proverbs*, which we read scattered and in parcels, from the Xth. Chap. are without Method, not written in a constant tenor, as the former *Nine*, by *Solomon*, But some at one time, some at another, as the matter and occasion afforded, were uttered by the *King*, observed by standers by, and, afterwards, not without great benefit, though without order, committed to Writing.

And other occasions there were for uttering others (for, so wise a man spake nothing rashly or unseasonably,) but, for this *Proverbe* now in hand, what hint was given, to what it was an answer, upon what occasion it was pronounced, is not so evident. For what *Solomon* was no

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Grater on the *Laitie*, much lesse (which is as infamous) on the *Clergy*. None more bountifull then Hee, towards *Holy things*; none farther from *Alienating*. Whence then, or what had He to do with *Sacrilegious persons*, or *Vow-breakers*, whom this Verse points at? Was there any in *Solomons* time, of so cursed a stomach, that *Consecrated Things* must be his Morfels? Any, in that age, such an enemy to *Holy Things*, as to *Devoure* them? Of *Vowes*, as to breake them? So it should seeme: And indeed to this passe it came, that *Interpreters*, of no small account with mee, are of opinion it was so; and that there were some such in those dayes, of whom there are not a few, now. And that this pious and wise answer, was given by that Wise and Pious Prince to those *Gounsfellers*, who laboured to perswade him, that those things, which were given and designed by His *Father*, by *Saul* and *Samuel*, and reserved in the *Treasury* for the building of the *Temple*, might be *Alienated*, and spent upon *Court Vanities*.

I shall diduce this a little higher.

2 Sam. 7. 2. To David (whom the Holy Scriptures call a Man after Gods heart) God gave such a mind, being a man to His mind, that he judged it unseemly, the storm of War being now blown over, that He himselfe should dwell in Cedar, and the Ark of GOD lodg between Curtaines. And truly it is an unjust demand of certaine men, that the Church should be in no better condition, now flourishing with Peace, then formerly she was, when groaning under the Crosse; never Abound, ever in Need. The Temple must have its share in Prosperity; so thought David, so with David all the Saints. In times of War and distractions the Church must be content with Goat-skins, In Peace, and settled times, she requireth Carved works and Cedar. To this therefore David wholly gives

Philip. 4.
32.

gives and applyes Himselfe, and, besides much formerly dedicated and stored up to this purpose, by *Saul, Abner, Samuel*, and by Him piously and faithfully conserved, he bestowed further at his own charge, both *Cedar and Marble, Precious Stones and Metals*: And that not sparingly or grudgingly, and with an evill eye: For he expended 3000 *Talents of Gold*, 7000 of *Silver*. And besides not content with that, partly by his example, partly by his perswasion, he wrought so far upon his *Nobles*, that they likewise ingaged themselves in the like vow and promise: By whose bounty there was an accession, of 5000 *Talents of Gold*, 10000 *Talents of Silver*, of *Brasse* 18000 *Talents*, and 100000 *Talents of Iron*, so great an accession, say I, that which hapned in our memory in the taking from the *Church*, did then in the addition to it, there was need of a *Court of Augmentations*, over which, the *Chronicles* testifie, one *Fibiël* was *President*.

1 Chro. 26.
27, 28.1 chro. 26
4.1 chro. 29
7.1 Chron.
29, 8.

This so great weight of *Gold and Silver*, when *David*, at the point of his death, delivered to *Solomon* his Sonne, for the building of the *Temple*; it being as yet in the *Treasury*, and not brought into the *Temple*; that there were certaine *Court-Ratts* (haply *Feroboam* and others of the same stamp,) who would perswade the *King*, as they in the Prophet, *That the House of GOD needed no silvring*; as He in the Gospell, *That CHRIST'S head might be well enough without Ointment*; To what purpose is this waste? That therefore He should apply it to his *Treasury*, for which it was much fitter then the *Temple*; and that they, to this end, were ready to make inquisition into *Souls and Abners Vowes*, and (which is easily done) pick out some holes, find out some tricks, to make those *Vowes null and invalid*. These Counsellors were not effectuell with the True-hearted *King*, but such Counsellors there were; and it seemes probable

P. Hag. 1.

Sr. Mark
14. 4.

to mee, that this was the occasion of this Verse, and that the *Rabbies* were not much out in their conjecture. That these Counsellors were not effectually, this Verse declares; which, with *Solomon* and the like godly *Princes*, will for ever stop the mouths of such Petitions. And also, why they were not. For, it would be a certaine *Snare* to Himselfe, and the *Ruin* of his Kingdome, if he should permit so great a wickednesse. It is indeed a bait, sufficiently enticing, but wrapt about with a *Snare* not to be avoyded.

You see whether the Words tend (and at the first view deliver themselves) *Viz.* to the conservation of the Sacred *Patrimony*, to the repelling of *Sacrilegious* hands from it, and stupifying or deadning their *Teeth* who do *Devour* it. Which I would to GOD this our Age could be perswaded of; in which a wicked custome, hath prevailed, and growes dayly more and more, of *Laying hands upon HOLY Things*; in which, there are no improvements to the *Clergy*, (would that were all!) there are frequent impairings; I say, frequent impairings; and I wish it might only be said, there are; and that there might never be cause of using the *Future tense*. But I shall speak freely; what for that *Unholy hunger after Gold*, there is nothing esteemed *HOLY*; and the restitution of *Holy Things* is the pretence for *SACRILEGE*.

Add to this humour of the present Age, another Error; That those *Worthies*, not to be named without all honorable respect, whose help *GOD* made use of for the *Reformation of Religion*, were very solicitous for the *Reformation of Doctrine*, but lesse attended the *Churches Patrimony*; and almost said, what the *King of Sodom* did to *Abraham*, though in another sense, *Give us the Soules, and take the rest to You*. But as they, who thought they should find the *Antichrist* in *Kings Courts*, so they, that think they shall

shall find *ABRAHAM* there, are both deceived:

Which Errour, though a small one (and a small one indeed it is, if we compare it with those great and famous acts performed by them) yet, we may justly feare, if not seasonably withstood, will lie heavy upon succeeding Ages: in which true-hearted honest men (from that of *Solomon*, *Pro. 14. 4. Where no Oxen are, the crib is cleane*) presage Barbarisme, or somewhat worse, which I will not speake of; falsly perchance, and I pray *GOD* it prove so, but not rashly, I am sure, not without cause. So that, in very truth, unlesse we would have the *Universities* to be broken up, the *Clergy* to be trampled on, and all that is called *HOLT* come to ruin, there lyes a necessity upon us to plead for the *Churches Patrimony*: That, which is left of it, let us aneill and rub over with this bitter juice; let us shew them the *Snare* in which they take paines to trap themselves; and, that it is not lawfull for them to do what dayly they attempt, unlesse it be lawfull for them to blot this Verse out of the *Holy Scriptures*.

And indeed to confesse the truth, this blur upon *our Age*, that *Holy Things* are so *Devoured*, much troubles me, (though there were, there were indeed, in *Solomons time*, such, whose teeth itched to be at them.) But this troubles me more, that we *Divines* see these things, and are lukewarme, nay silent; that we *put up* and *Devoure* these *Devourings*; that (which the *Apostle* complains of, *2. Cor. 11. 20.*) *We suffer if a man devoure us, if a man bring us into beggery.* But this most of all, that *we our selves*, (so it is) dayly expose *our selves* to be eat and drunk up, as I may so say, by these *Devourers of the Clergy*. This is not the way, believe me, to effect what we desire. 'Tis the wish of many, and mine among the rest, that we may have a *Learned* and a *Teaching Clergy*: Grant it *Lord JESUS*, grant it speedily;

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ly; It is a *Holy* and a *wholsome* wish: But, if wee suffer the *Churches* Meanes to be thus gnaw'd and shav'd, eaten, and devoured, a *Paine* wish. This was one peice of *Pharaohs* madnesse; He would have them sacrifice to the *Lord*; but not a *Sheepe* or *Oxe* to be allowed. *Exod. 10. 24.* And this is our *Error*, our *Madnesse* rather. Commanders of Armys are a great deal wiser: first, they take care for *Victuals*, then for *Souldiers*. But we dayly list many strong, good *Souldiers*; we bring them in no *Provision*, nay wee suffer that they have to be taken from them. And (which I have not seldome wondred at in these men) wee are ever talking of *increasing the Light*, seldom or never of *allowing Oyle*. But we must preach for one, as well as the other, the *Oyle* as well as the *Light*. We must often and vehemently call upon men to remember the *Treasury of GOD*: Wee must labour to bring them to that passe *Solomon* brought his, to esteeme it a part of *Religion*, not to touch any thing *set apart for Religion*; to fast, rather then make their meales upon *Holy Things*: to give themselves for choaked, and strangled, if they should, even unwittingly, swallow down that which is *Holy*: This if accomplished, I shall hope for dayes as good as *SOLOMONS*. If not—But I will not presage any thing greivous. I goe on to my purpose.

The Verse I shall divide, as it divides it selfe, into 2. Parts. The One, concerning *Holy Things not to be Devour'd*.
2. The Other, concerning *Vowes* not anxiously to be inquir'd into.

The First, for my more distinct progresse, I shall part into 3. Members.

1. What Things those are which *Solomon* calls *HOLY*.
2. Who they are that *Devoure* them.
3. They, that do, ingage themselves in a *great sin*, catch themselves in a *Snare*.

I. Of the first. By Solomon in this Chapter, that part of our substance is called *Holy*, wherewith (chap. 3. ver. 9.) Hee told us, *God ought to be honoured*. For not *Argus* alone hath power to *tax the world*, *God* hath also His power of *Taxing*; and that out of His full right over our Goods. Of which to take away all obscurity or doubt from any; Under the *Law* He commanded two diuerse *Cornes of money*.
 1. One stamped with the *Sword, and Scepter of the Prince*.
 2. The other with the *Pot, and Rod of Aaron*. By the One allotting to the *Prince his Tribute*, for his Protection of us; by his *Scepter*, against *Injustice and Contention*; by his *Sword*, against *Hostility*. By the *Other* allowing the *Priest his due*; by whose labour it is *Gods pleasure* of dry Trees to make us live and flourish; and, living to *Feed Vs with Heavenly Manna* to *Eternall life*. *God the Father* commanded both; *God the Son* paid both: *Doves to the Temple, Tribute to the Prince*. That *First* is the *sacred Tribute*.

Of which to take a little more exact knowledge. Four things there are, which in *Holy Scripture* are called *Holy*.

What things are called Holy.

1. Among them that is the first and principall, for which the other are sanctified: I meane, the *first Fruits* of the *Spirit*; namely *Holinesse* it selfe, with which they must bee adorned, who looke to enter into that *holy and heavenly Hierusalem*. It is the *Encomium* given to *God* by the *Holy Angels* (so by *them*, so by *us*.) P. *Esay* 6. 3. *Holy, Holy, Holy*. So hath *God* commanded us under the *Law*. Be ye *holy*, for *I am holy*. So under the *Gospell*, 1 *Thess.* 4. 3. *This is the will of God even your holinesse*: *This is the will of God, ought to be ours*. Since *God the Father* hath chosen his *Church* (which we are) *before the world*. *God the Son Redeemed from the world*: and *God the Spirit anointed in the world*. You have the first, our *Sanctification*.

Levit. 20. 7

Eph. 1. 4.

Eph. 5. 26

1. Cor. 6. 11

2. Cor. 1. 3

2. But, for the begetting of Holinesse, first, and then increasing it, in us. Hee hath sanctified a second sort of *Holy things*. To wit, *Four Meanes*: 1. *The Word*. 2. *Prayer*. 3. *Sacraments*. 4. *Censures*. 1. *The Word*, principally; 2. *Sanctifie them by thy Truth, thy Word is Truth*. 2. To which *Prayer* is coupled. 3. *Sanctified by the Word of G O D and Prayer*. 3. Then the *Holy Sacraments*, 1. *Of Baptisme*, Ephes. 5. 2. *Of the Eucharist*, Hebr. 13. 4. Lastly, *Censures*. These *Christ* calleth *Holy*, not to be cast to dogs; Sanctified by himselfe, both to retain us in, and recall us to our duty. This the Second. *Holy Meanes*.

3. Further for the exercising of these *Meanes*, and applying them to that use to which he hath ordained them, Hee hath sanctified a third sort of *Holy things*. Which is threefold. 1. *Of the Place, where*. 2. *Of the Time, when*. 3. *Of the Persons, by whom*, they ought to be administered.

1. *Of the Place*. Which He therefore calleth *Holy*, and the *Sanctuary*, S. Matth. 24. 15.

2. *Of the Time*. Which He calleth the *Holy day* of the *Lord*, P. Elay 58. 13.

3. *Of the Person*; Whom He therefore calleth his *Holy One*, Deut. 33. 8. You have the *Third*.

4. But to these *Persons* thus imploy'd in *Divine Offices*, and making little account of their own in respect of *Holy things*, a fourth kinde, viz. of *Holy Tribute* was appointed for their maintenance and lively-hood. *Ezechias*, the best of *Kings*, hath very well comprised the whole businessse, appointing a fit portion to the *Priests & Levites*; that they might more courageously attend the study of the *Law*. Which portion, that it should be deemed *Holy*, there was an expresse command by G O D Himselfe. Both under the *Law*, where the *People* was taught to say, *I have brought away the hallowed things out of my house*, which was to acknowledge that which

which was payd to the *Lewise* as a *Holy Tribute*; and also under the *Gospel*; where, not only those things we are exercised in, but, those also which we live upon, are termed by *Saint Paul*, the *Holy things of the Temple*. *1 Cor. 9.*

So you have a fourfold sort of *Holy things*, one issuing from another, and appointed for the conservation each of other. *1 Holy Manners. 2 Holy Meanes. 3 Holy Persons. 4 Holy Revenues.* Our business is about this fourth. For no man gapes after, or fastens his teeth upon those three: This last, this, this it is, upon which they set their teeth and stomach. Though indeed, as I shall shew anon, there is but one bit, one draught of all. Truly, they are ty'd in a close and strong knot together, *Holy Revenues, Holy Persons, Holy Meanes, Holy Manners.* Nor shall we be ever able to keep up *Holy Manners* without due *Meanes*; nor due *Meanes* without fit *Persons*; nor fit *Persons* without ample *Revenues and comings in.*

This therefore which *Solomon* calleth *Holy*, is the *Tribute of the Sanctuary*. But what is that, or how so called? I shall tell you that, too. The *Holy Scripture* is plentiful about it; but it may be reduced to two heads. *1 Of Oblation. 2 Of Indiction.*

1. Of Oblation; either by *Vow*, or *Freewill*; that the *Hebrews* call *Neder*, this *Nedabab*. These will fall into the second member, I will not prosecute it. Only this I say; The *Church* had a *Patent* granted her, by vertue whereof every one had leave to *alienate and set apart* what he would of his own to *holy uses*, and that either by way of *Freewill offering*, or by *Vow*; whether it were *Person*; or *Beast*, *Cleane* or *uncleane*, of the *Flock*; or of the *Herd*; whether *Houses* or *Landes*; of inheritance or purchase. The same gracious Licence remained under the *Gospel*, for any to lay downe; what, how much hee would, of his own, at the

a a Vow, simply.
vid. Gen. 28. 20.
b a free-will Offering.
vid. Levit. 7. 16.
Deut. 16. 10.
joyned with Missab. Levit. 27.

Acts 4. 35. *His feet, that is, to give, bestow, dedicate, consecrate his Goods to God.* *And to the Indiction, that which is set and determined.* And sure there was a necessity for this; lest, if those *Freemill offerings* should come in coldly, and the *Treasury of the Church* should be, as it is often, empty for want of a constant *showre of Manna*, the Priests should well nigh starve. I am to treat of a hard point, and (that, which grieves mee most) but briefly. It is certain that in every ones *estate* there is a *sacred part*. This is more obscure, *what* that is, or *how much*. Abraham the father of the Faithfull (wholly to be imitated by his Children for the Place and Measure of their donation) layd upon himselfe the *Tith*, the *Leviticall Law* being not then written. How so, who declared to him the *measure of the Divine portion*? no doubt but the *Holy Spirit* to *so holy a man*. That same Spirit, who before had tacitely dictated it to Abraham, did afterward by an expresse Law take order for that and no other *portion*, to be payd to *Persons consecrated by Him*. Indeed to some this seemes wholly ceremonial, as all things doe now a dayes that touch the *purse*. Others will not allow any portion to be by *Natural Right*, nor so great by *Positive*. That God was indeed as carefull for our sustenance, as He was for the *Levites*. That there was nothing then reserved to the *Positive Law*, nor therefore now: and to this purpose they urge that in the 23. of *St. Matth.* *Ye ought not to leave the other undone.* I came hither to Preach, not to dispute: and therefore be- take my self to the more received opinion, that *Tithes* have their force from the *Imposition of the Church*. For the same power which the Church had of old to make *Ordinances*, and to charge it self with a *Shekel* or the third part of a *Shekel* for the *Service of the House of God* remaineth still the same under the *Gospel*, in which you shall meet with *offerings and sacrifices*.

H. Nels:

10. 33.

Acts 4. 29.

1 Cor. 16. 1.

Decrees

Decrees and Ordinances; and those, not only, as *St. Paul* Acts 21. testifieth, for *Almes* to the Poore, but also, for *Offerings*.^{17.} When therefore the *Primitive Church* would take order for a set allowance for such as attended the *Divine Service*, turning her selfe on all sides, and casting up her thoughts, she found out no equaler *Portion* which she could ordaine; then that known old one and appointed by the Law, *Viz.* the *Tith* of the yearly comings in; the most equal in respect of *GOD* and Man. In respect of *GOD*, so *St. Augustine* in the person of *GOD*. *Thou art mine; o man; this Earth, which thou tillest, is mine; these Seeds, which thou sowest, are mine; these Beasts, which thou employest, mine; the Raine and Showers, mine; the Sun and heat, mine; all, mine; thou which lendest only thy hand, deserveest only the Tith; but I grant Nine to thee; give me the Tith.* Could a more reasonable speech possibly be made?

In respect of *Man*, that must needs be most equal, which is not too loose for one, too strait for another. By this, there is a most exact equality: the *Rich* are not spared, the *Poore* are not oppressed: which is the common complaint of the *Edicts* of *Princes*; the *Crow*, there, better then the *Dove*.

This *Portion* therefore the *Church* hath hallowed, and given that honor to *God* the author of this *Imposition*; to believe that He best knew the *Measure of His own Tribute*; and that no *Councils of the Church*, no *Assemblies of the Kingdome* could settle that affaire more wisely, then it was of old provided for by the *Sacred Law*; then the *Lawyer himselfe* (so absolute, that *Iustinian* is no body to him) had proclaimed many ages since. But then, you'l say, She who imposed it, may, when She will, forbid it. I think not, but, however, would not perswade her to it; and that upon this ground; both, because a dangerous custome might thence arise, to hold for *Sacred* what we list, how much we list, as long

as

as we list, if we grant that: and also, because the *rights of inheritances* ought to be *most holy*: and God calleth His *Covenants, Covenants of salt*, therefore not to be made and unmade, inroach'd upon, exchange'd, or repealed at our pleasure: Again, because an *ancient Law* ought not to be antiquated, saving for its (*aidurs* or *irruptions*) *weaknesse* or *unprofitablenesse*. Heer's neither. For I see its *strength* from the *Author, Consent, Custome, Multitude*; and not the *mute* or *silent*, but the *expresse* and *clear approbation* of all ages. And its *use*, as manifestly: for it hath a long time been employed, without complaint of any, to that *use* to which it was appointed: and, unlesse the *sinewes* of it had been cut by certaine *Improper Proprietaries*, it had been better employed, neither would the *Church* have ever complained in that point. And then, lastly, because, where by crafty counsell the *Tith* hath beene chang'd into a *stipend*, they wish it undone: thence many *errors, deceipts, difficulties, complaints* have risen. There was a complaint of the *Church of Scotland* exhibited to the *Parliament at Edinburgh, A. D. MDLXV*, when I read the eighth Lease of it, it pities me for them: I say no more, but what the Boys use to sing, *Felix quem faciunt, &c.* Happy they, whom other mens harms make to beware.

Let this *custome* then stand inviolable; and so I shut up this first part, with telling you, that whatsoever is either *dedicated by Vow*, or *imposed by Law* is *Holy*; and (in the language of the *Twelve Tables*) *Qui clepserit reperitue, Sacrilegus esto*: whosoever diminisheth or devouteth it, is guilty of *Sacrilege*.

You know now what are *Holy things*. What it is to *devoure Holy things*; which I promised to shew in the second place, now learne: The Prophet *Malachy*, for the *Old Testament* calls it to rob; Saint *Luke*, for the *New*, *propitius* to defraud,

2
hat it is
devoure
ply
ngs.
Mal. 3. 8
IP
cis. 5. 3.

or

or *devour*. In which point *Salomon* seemes to mee to have used a most fit word, when he called that *devoured*, which was most properly to be said to be *alienated*.

1. For, when we eat of *our owne*, we eat, as mannerly people doe, by morsells, well chewed and ground: if it be *Another's*, we snatch at it, and, lest the true owner of it should come upon us and take the bit out of our mouthes, we swallow it down suddenly and all together. In that respect, first, properly said to *devoure*, because not *our owne*.

2 Secondly in this, because *Greedily*. Look me upon *Seneca's Mistriffe*, or rather the *P. Esays Dog*, gaping at *P. Isa. 30* the table, never stirring his eyes, but wagging his eyle, *II.* and fawning upon you, while you sling him somewhat. And then shew me one of our *Clergy-Devourers* stretching his chops and foul upon the *Church*, *Meames*, gaping, and his teeth itching to be at them, ever and anon up with, *Give me those grounds, give me that superfluous farme, this decayed Church.* I pray what difference? In that respect, secondly, because *Greedily-taken*.

3 Againe, mark that *Dog well*, you shall see him not only *Greedy*, but one that cannot be satisfied, never having enough. If a bone be flung to him, 'tis down in an instant, and he's gaping againe, no lesse then afore. In like manner, you may observe these to be ever craving, *sick of a droppe*; their thirst increaseth with their drink; you may know them to be a kin to the *Florsleach*, whose daughters are ever crying, ** Give, Give*.

4 Lastly, what usually falls out to such devouring and ravenous creatures, as *Kites*, *Wolves*, *Locusts*, that they are ever *starv'ling*; none of them grows the fatter, or in better case, even so to these. Just as *Pharaoh's faine him* eat up the fat ones, and yet were ill favoured as before; so these are ever snatching, and ever in want, *G o v blowing upon*

pro. 30. 15
אין אין

Gen. 41

upon their goods thus gotten, that we may even wonder what is become of that masse of treasure which, not many yeares since, went into the *stomach of the Common wealth.* Let this tell us what it is to *Devoure*: Namely, ² *Greedyly to swallow down,* ¹ *What is not ours but Gods,* ³ *With which we shall not be nourished,* ⁴ *nor satisfied.* I have done with the *Thing*: now breisly of the *Persons.*

Who the
Persons
that De-
voure,

There is a twofold sort of men: ¹ Such as have *no Right* at all. ² Such as indeed have a *Right*, but shamefully and wickedly abuse it.

2 Such as
have no
Right,

¹ Such as have *no Right*: Their sin is a hundred times more heinous, though both's be heinous. For if hee sin-
neth, who slingeth away that which is *his owne*; how great a sinner is hee, who taketh away that which is *another's*, to which he hath *no Right*, no nor any *capacity of Right* (as they say) and that with injury to *God*; and that not to any *God*, but the *living God.* Every one *his owne*; so *Justice* wills: This is their *owne*; but so *Theirs*, that, first, *Gods*: and these men sin, first, against *Heaven*, then against *Us*: for *His primary Right* *God* reserveth to *Himselfe*. If every ones *owne* to the *true owner*, then, what is *Gods*, to *God*. But these are *Gods*, if we will believe *God*. *Gods*, twice, indeed. First, by *His Creation*; so that wee must all necessarily say with *David*, *These things which wee give are all thine owne*: we give thee but *thine owne*. By *His Creation*, first; by *our Dedication*, secondly. Which *God* by a *secondary Right* hath made over to *Us*, as most just that *We*, who are constituted *for men* in the things which appertain to *God*, should be constituted for *God* in those things which appertain to *Men*; that *We*, who reach to *Men* the things which are *Gods*, should receive, the things which are *Gods*, from *Men*. *God* hath made over to us this *Right*, and that so strictly, that it is lawfull, not only not to take any thing away, no not by *Ignorance*; But
(which

Rom. 13.7
Numb. 18
St. Matth:
22.

1-Chro 29,
14.

Levit. 5.

(which is lawfull in *Civil* matters) not to *sell*; I say not, *P. Eze. 48.*
not all, but not a *part*. Not to *sell*, not to *buy*? much lesse *14.*
 then to *devoure*. And truly this is not his fault alone who
 extorts it, but the *Magistrates* too who permits it: Where-
 upon that good Prince *Nehemiah* protesteth, not only that He *H. Neh. 13*
 did not take away the *Holy things*; but, that He was absent *6,*
 from the *City*, when they were taken away. And that if he
 had beene present, rather than have suffered it, hee would
 (with *Artaxerxes*) have bestowed somewhat from his own
Exchequer, or (with *Pharaoh*) from his own *Table*. I say ther-
 fore, that they, who cut the *Levites* short of what they
 ought to receive, offend against *God*, whether they do it by
force or by *fraud*; whether they imploy it to *pay Souldiers*,
 or *build Houses*; whether they do it for *profit*, or *pleasure*;
 whether they invert *all*, or but a *part*. By *Force* wicked *A-*
thalia breaking into the *House of God*, and taking away all
 that was therein: by *Fraud* wicked *Achan* privily digging in
 his *Tent*, added the *Sacred spoyle* to his own household stuffe:
Joas pretended to provide for the *Publique Good*; for with
 the *Treasurie* of the *House of God* He procured condidons
 of *Peace*, but a slippery *Peace*; for He *Devoured the Holy*
things. *Jeroboam* seemed to intend the *Publique Honor*; for
 He built *Shechem*, and *Phenuel*; but in *blood*; for it was
 with the spoile of the *Temple*, and the alienating of the
Tithes: *Tobias* furnished himselte a chamber in the *Porch*
 of *God*, for his *Profit* and *Convenience*: *Balsazar* for *Hu Plea-*
sure drank out of the *Vessels of the Sanctuary*: all of them were
Sacrilegious. Finally, not only that *EPIMANES* who ransackt
All; but *Judas* also, who was so bold as to thrust his *Sacri-*
legious fingers into *Christs bag*, though content with a *Part*,
 was guilty of the same crime: as was likewise that *Sacri-*
legious Couple, who durst invade the *Church Treasurie*, and
 detein but a *part* of that which had touch'd the feet of the

upon their goods thus gotten, that we may even wonder what is become of that masse of treasure which, not many yeares since, went into the *stomach of the Common wealth.* Let this tell us what it is to *Devoure*: Namely, *1. Greedily to swallow down, 2. What is not ours but Gods, 3. With which we shall not be nourished, 4. nor satisfied.* I have done with the *Thing*: now breifly of the *Persons.*

Who the
Persons
that De-
voure,

1. Such as
have no
Right,

Rom. 13, 7
Numb. 18
St. Matth.

1. Chro 29,
24.

Levit. 5.

There is a twofold sort of men: Such as have *no Right* at all. 2. Such as indeed have a *Right*, but shamefully and wickedly abuse it.

1. Such as have *no Right*: Their sin is a hundred times more heinous, though both's be heinous. For if hee sinneth, who singeth away that which is *his owne*; how great a sinner is hee, who taketh away that which is *another's*, to which he hath *no Right*, no nor any *capacity of Right* (as they say) and that with injury to *God*; and that not to *any God*, but the *living God.* Every one *his owne*; so *Justice* wills: This is *their owne*; but so *Theirs*; that, first, *Gods*: and these men sin, first, against *Heaven*, then against *Us*: for *His primary Right* God reserveth to *Himselfe*. If every ones *owne* to the *true owner*, then, what is *Gods*, to *God*. But these are *Gods*, if we will believe *God*. *Gods*, twice, indeed. First, by *His Creation*; so that wee must all necessarily say with *David*, *These things which wee give are all thine owne: we give thee but thine owne.* By *His Creation*, first; by *our Dedication*, secondly. Which *God* by a *secondary Right* hath made over to *Us*, as most just that *We*, who are constituted *for men* in the things which appertain to *God*, should be constituted for *God* in those things which appertain to *Men*; that *We*, who reach to *Men* the things which are *Gods*, should receive, the things which are *Gods*, from *Men*. *God* hath made over to us this *Right*, and that so strictly, that it is lawfull, not only not to take any thing away; no not by *Ignorance*; But (which

(which is lawfull in *Civil* matters) not to *sell*; I say not, *P. Ezr. 4. 8.*
not all, but not a *part*. Not to *sell*, not to *buy*? much lesse *14.*
 then to *devoure*. And truly this is not his fault alone who
 extorts it, but the *Magistrates* too who permits it: Where-
 upon that good Prince *Nehemiah* protesteth, not only that He *H. Nch. 13*
 did not take away the *Holy things*; but, that He was absent *6,*
 from the *City*, when they were taken away. And that if he
 had beene present, rather than have suffered it, hee would
 (with *Artaxerxes*) have bestowed somewhat from his own
Exchequer, or (with *Pharaoh*) from his own *Table*. I say ther-
 fore, that they, who cut the *Levites* short of what they
 ought to receive, offend against *God*, whether they do it by
force or by *fraud*; whether they imploy it to *pay Souldiers*,
 or *build Houses*; whether they do it for *profit*, or *pleasure*;
 whether they invert *all*, or but a *part*. By *Force* wicked *A-*
thalia breaking into the *House of God*, and taking away all
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legious fingers into *Christs bag*, though content with a *Part*,
 was guilty of the same crime: as was likewise that *Sacri-*
legious Couple, who durst invade the *Church Treasurie*, and
 detain but a *part* of that which had touch'd the feet of the

Apistles. Every one of these was guilty of *Sacrilege*.

Such as
have right,
but abuse
it.

2. Now we must speak concerning the second Sort. A kind of men there is indeed, who have a *Right*, but they wickedly abuse that *Right*. You think, perhaps, I will go far hence to seeke; I stir not a foote, I move not hence; We are the Men; and even amongst us, there are many, too too many, who *Devoure Holy things*. For (which, it is to be feared, some of vs do) by sloth and Idleness, to tarry here like *Drones*, to sling away our precious houres, to flow in *Luxury*, to be at leasure for feasts, and playes, and vanities, to do these things, and yet to fatten our selves with those things which are consecrated to *Holy uses*, this is, in our *Servants* judgment, to *Devoure*, and spend our Fathers goods in riotous Living.

S. Luk. 15.
13.

I will come nearer yet. A great part of that former *Devouring* came from our selves: and therefore are *Holy things Devoured by others*, because they are *Devoured by Our selves*: And indeed as lawfull (think some) for *them*, to gather the *Holy Tiths*, and to neglect the *Holy Duties*, as for *us*. And truly (to tell you my feares) they who now sheere the fleece, will one day pull off skin and fleece together; they who are now gnawing at *Church Meanes*, will consume *them* at last with open mouth, unlesse God change our minds and manners. For sure there is no throat so *Holy*, that it can be lawfull for it to consume the things that are *Holy*; it is lawfull to eat, to feed upon *them*: but to *Devoure* *them* is, not only unlawfull, but, a high wickednes, not only for those *Leacuses*, but even for us too. May there be heapes, heapes of provision, but for them that *eat the Holy warfare*, let them that partake of the *Altar*, wait on the *Altar*. 1 Cor. 9. 14. But to him that partakes and waits not, that spends the *Meanes*, and attends not the work, to him it is sin.

2 Chron.
31, 4, 6.

I speak not this that the people may partake in the (Punish)

wages:

wages: they may no more take from the *Shckel* of *Caiphas* an evill *Priest*, then from the *tribute* of *Tiberius* a wicked *Prince*; to both they must give their *due*, though they do not performe their *duty*; both of them are the *Ministers* of *God*, and stand or fall to *Him*. Both take that, which belongs to *God*, if they take it with *Sacrilegious* hands, and must give an account to *GOD*. I speak it to this end, as wishing Both in a better mind, *Laity* and *Clergy*. *Them*, that, for the future, they would be *quiet* and forbear to *Devoure Holy things*, by *unjust detention* and *alienation*; *These*, that, for the future, they would *labour* and forbear to *Devoure Holy things*, by *idlenesse*, and *misemploying*.

What it is, who they are that *Devoure Holy things*, is now clear, I would it were not so clear.

Him, that shall, what is like to befall, (which was my third Propofall,) now hearken: *It is a snare*. That some such there should be, who would do it, *Solomon* foresaw; and future ages have prov'd too true. In truth there is such a *curst holy hunger*, that there will be *Theft*, there will bee *Sacrilege*, there will be a *total overthrow* of all that is called *Holy*, unlesse *God* Himselfe take order, to the contrary, by immediate command, countermand, nay by thunder and lightning, and so provide that they be untouch'd: 'Tis so *sweet a bit*, so pleasant to the *Palat*, so full of *delights*, that you may rend their chops, and breake their jawes, yer you shall get it from them. This is not as it should be; *Solomon* therefore adds, Let them eat and drink *Holy things*, if they like them so well: perhaps the *bait* may please, but under the *bait* there lyes a *hook*, which they swallow with it. Let them take heed of the *bait*, there is a *net* not far off: let them not meddle with the *Field*, it is an *Acheldama*, a *field of blond*. Let them not take away the *gifts* of the *Temple*, for they are wrapt about with the *Anathema* of *Heaven*, a

8
Their
punish-
ment who
Devoure.

curse for the spoylers. By which word *Solomon* very aptly, and elegantly compareth the whole matter, whereof he treateth, to *Fowling*, wherein *Satan* the great hunter of soules, (for so *H. David*, Psalm 91. 3. so *Saint Paul* calls him, 2 Tim. 2. 26.) waiteth for his prey, layeth out, for his bait, Church Lands and Revenues, but covered over with the Crime of *Sacrilege*, as with a gin or snare. There you may see our Clergy-eaters; who (as *Pharaoh* thought, when he oppressed the Church, Come let us deale wisely) take themselves to be very wise, having made a gaine of holy things, hasten to the snare with these foolish birds, (Prov. 7. 23.) not knowing that it is for their life: Fly as soone as they see the prey, to take, but are taken, and devouring the prey, are made his prey, who goes about, day and night, seeking whom he may devoure. It is a most true saying, that in every sin there is a bait and a snare, a bait pretended, a snare which lyeth hid. The bait, some little profit of iniquity, or some small trifling pleasure of sin; the snare, the sin, with its sting, viz. the fearefull curse of the Law. I will not go far hence; chap. 5. v. 3. 4. In wandring Lust: the bait, the lips of the Harlot, distilling nothing but hony; the snare, the reliques of sin more bitter than wormwood, more sharp then a sword. Chap. 23. v. 31. 32. In luxury and drunkenness; the bait, the colour of the Wine in the Glasse, the tast in the Palat; the snare, the biting as of the Serpent or Basilisk, which with its sting brings certaine death.

In this very chap. ven. 17. In *stealth*, the bait, Bread of deceit, stollen, got without sweat; the snare, sin filling the mouth with gravell, whence necessarily followeth the gnashing of the teeth. Every sin, I say, hath its bait, and its snare: but this sin of *Sacrilege*, more and above all other. The bait, I take for granted: the snare I shall shew, if you please, even in *Prophane stories*. *Cambyses*, who rifled the Temple of *Jupiter Hammon*, found it destructive to himselfe; *Brennus*, who

who robbed the *Delphick*, found it destructive to himselfe and his: *Crassus* who did as much to the *Temple* at *Hierusalem*, was forced to swallow downe melted Gold with the same chaps, which he had before devoured the *Holy things* with. Had you rather have *Sacred stories*? I follow your desires in that too. *Dathan*, who had but a mind to devour *Holy things*, was himselfe devoured of the Earth: *Achan*, who was the first that adventured to add the *Sacred* Wedge of Gold to his owne household stuffe, was devoured of a heap of stones in the Valley of *Achor*. *Baltazar*, when he held the *sacred* Vessells betwixt his fingers, saw, over against him on a Wall, fingers, which proved fatal to his life and Kingdom: *Atbalia*, slaine with a sword within the close of the *Temple*, of that very *Temple*, whose *Treasure*, it is not long since, she tooke away. But because 'tis an easie matter to find the just vengeance upon *Sacrilege*, under the *Law*, and the credit of the *Old Testament* is in this point suspected, I had rather shew it from the *New*. There, *Judas* who first filch'd from his *Masters* baggs, afterwards betrayed his *Master* himselfe, and, as a just punishment of his former sins, taught us by his miserable example, that there is an *halter*, a *snare*, which lyeth hid in these *Holy things*. This befell him who theiv'd from *Christ*. But they, who first dared to make an inrode upon the *Church stock*, (though it be all one) I say not to take it away being given, but only to detein it, before it was given, (the *Gospel* it selfe making no plea, nor interceding for the fact) were choaked with a sudden and most horrid death, upon a word of the *Apostle*. Vpon which place I will stand a little more: For it is, as the fairest, so the most apposite and full in this point.

First, then, it is evident that *things may be consecrated to Holy use*, even under the *Gospel*.

Secondly, That *being so consecrated, they are no longer*

common.

C 3

Thirdly,

Numb. 16

32.

H. Ios. 7. 25

P. Dan. 5.

24. 25.

2 Kings

11. 16.

Act. 5. 10.

Thirdly, that, since they are not *ours*, they cannot be de-
 stined without great *sin*, not *taken away* without greater.

Fourthly, That whosoever doth one or t'other, doth it
 therefore, because *Satan hath filled his heart.* (*Sacrilegious*
Persons, then, are filled with *Satan*.)

Fifthly, That this kind of men is to be punished with
death, not only with *censures*.

Sixthly, And that *death sudden*, that there should be no
 space for the *expiating* of so great a *sin*. And,

Seventhly, with *death immediately from Heaven*, wherby
 God declared, as it were from Heaven, that he himselfe was
 the *avenger* of so great a wickednesse.

These examples, *Fathers* and *Brethren*, are from the *Gos-*
pel. The *Gospel* is no milder against these men then is the
Law. And even the *Gospel* itselfe, the Minister of life, hath
 its *snare*, a *snare of death*, for that man, for that Conscience,
 which makes no *Conscience* or *Religion* of devouring what be-
 longs to *Religion*.

Yes, but how many *Sacrilegious persons* hath no such
 thing befallen? For it is not usuall or perpetuall which is
 inflicted on a *growing mischeife*: Neither doth *Solomon* say
 it is, that they shall be taken in the *very act*. But what he
 saith, is *usual*, neither do examples fail us, for, though they
 may escape the *light* and *day* for a while, they shal not escape
 so; *Solomons snare* will take them by the *heel*. For the *snare*
 he speaks of, is the *Snare of a Fowler*; in which perhaps the
bird, that is taken, is not presently strangled, but rangled by
 the *foot* or *neck*, oftentimes till the evening, and oftentimes longer,
 till the return of the *Fowler*. Many times the destruction is
 slow, but ever sure.

I believe you have observed, that the *Holy Scriptures*
 speak not of the *punishment* of wicked men, alwayes, after the
 same manner. The *Wrath* of *God* is sometimes as a *Storme*
 suddenly

suddenly rushing down all before it; sometimes as a *Net* H. Iof. 23. taking for the present, and after a while slaying. In P. *Esay*, 13. (Chap. 51. v. 8.) it is an *Axe* suddenly cutting down: and it is a *Moth* consuming by peicemeale. In P. *Hosaa*, (Chap. 5. v. 12.) He saith, he will be a *Lyon* to some, to others *rottenesse* and a *Moth*: a *Lyon*, which teareth in a moment; a *Moth*, which weareth out insensibly and by degrees. The *Apo-plexie* killeth one way, the *Hectik* another, but both kill. A *Ship* perisheth one while by *neglecting the Pump*: another while by the *Overflowing of the Billows*; but both wayes it perisheth. That *Thunderbolt* of St. Peter effected the businesse sooner; this *Snare* of *Solomon*, slower: but both this and that bring the same businesse about, have the same issue.

This is the fruit of *Sacrilege*. Men fly upon the *bait*, nay into the *net* too, but being wholly intent and set upon the *prey*, they tast its *sweetnes*, but take no heed to the *danger*, with which they intangle and snare both *Soul* and *Conscience*. Not so indeed, that they come suddenly to ruin, but, feast upon this *Warme*, while they have devoured all, but when they would get loose, they shall find that they are held with the *cords* of sin, *Pro.* 5. 22. with the *snare*s of death, *Psal.* 118. and that the *judgement*, which, perchance, rusheth not suddenly upon them, but waiteth at the doore, is not to be made slight of. That the *Fowler* will come at last, will certainly come, and the *Soule* so *insnared* shall be *his prey*; a prey, I say, to the *Devil*, (*GOD* and what belongs to *God*, having been formerly *his prey*) by that most just sentence, *P. Jer.* 30. 16. *They that devour thee shall be devoured.*

I have shewed you the *Snare*. And that is layd for * דגל
Man. Both *Him* that *sin*, and *others* for his sake. For such is the nature of this *sin*, that it reacheth all the *Camp* over, that it makes the whole *Common-wealth* a valley of *Achor*.

Touching

Touching the *Sacrilegious Person* himselfe, we have told you, that he provides very ill for *his own private fortune*, into which he bringeth this *curst* gain, as a pledg or earnest of misfortune. These *Holy things* will eat out the bottom of his bags, in which they are crowded, and will make them full of holes and rents. *This field* will blast and burn up all his other *fields*: *This stuffe* will bring a consumption upon all the rest; the punishment, this, denounced by the P. *Haggai*. Worse, then so, betides their *Souls*, which they fill with *Satan*, who catcheth them in an inexplicable *Snare*, and reserveth them to that *Judgment* which is insufferable.

I will speake breisly, both of the *Common-wealth*, and of the *Church*.

When this *sin* is once admitted, God sendeth a *Devourer* upon the *State*, for the *Devouring* of his *Holy things*. Either the *Catterpillar*, P. *Malachy* 3. 11. or *Men* worse then the *Catterpillar*. The *Kings of Israel*, when they once plundered *Holy things*, had no peace, but much trouble and vexation, going out or comming in; what they took from the *Temple*, they were forc'd to sling away upon the *Souldiers*, the *Camp-Locusts*. In *S. Augustin's* time, when the *President of the Provinces* rifled the *Sanctuaries*, that people was not enriched by it. What they tooke from the *Temple*, they were forc'd to sling away upon the *Lawyers*, the *Bar-Locusts*. Because *Devotion* to God decreased, the commings in to the *Exchequer* increased. One *devourer* follows another, either a *Brigade of Souldiers*, or a *swarm of Lawyers*. There will be a *Snare* for certain; or a *Snare of Law*, or a *Snare of Taxes*, or a *Snare of War*: doubtlesse, God will raine down *Snares* upon such a *Nation*.

Now breisly, touching the *Church*. But, there, when the *Holy Portion* is *devour'd*, all that is *Holy* is *devoured* with it. For by weakning the hands of the present *Clergy*, and alienating

alienating the minds of others for the future, either there will be no *Prophet* at all, or he, that shall be, will himselfe be a *Snare* in the *waies of Israel*. The *People* will become the prey of the *Dragon*: of that *Dragon* who standeth before the *woman now ready to bring forth*, that, when she hath brought forth, he may *Devoure* it. For certainly a greater *sin* then *Sacrilege* lyes under this; and (what I admonished at the first) these men are, not only *Sacrilegious*, but, to be taken for *Enemies* to all that is called *Holy*. P. Hof. 8.9. Revel. 12.4

For whereas these foure kinds of *Holys* cleave, and are, as it were, bound up together, *1. Holy Manners. 2. Meanes. 3. Persons. 4. Revenues.* There is but one bit of all; and, it cannot be but, he, that shall swallow *one*, must needs swallow *all* the rest, at the same draught. Let there be no *Revenue*, there wil be no *Levite*. *H. Nebe. 13. 10.* Do you see all this great Assembly? Every one of them will betake himselfe to the Country, and give over the *House of God*, unlesse order be taken for their sufficient maintenance. Let there be no *Prophet*, there will be no *Prophecy*, no *Law*. If those be but once gone, there will be no learned *Priest*, to teach the people. The *Holy Spirit* joynes these two together. *2 Chro. 15. 3.* *Without 1. a Teaching Priest, and without the 2. Law.* Let there be no *Prophecy*, and there shall be no *People*. *K. Solomons* word for it; *Prov. 29. 18.* The issue of all is, those men, who *Devoure Holy things*, *Devoure* also the *Prophess*, as they did their *Judges*. But they, who *devoure* the *Prophess*, *devoure* *Soules*. They, that *devoure* *Soules*, *devoure* the *People of GOD* as it were *bread*. Whosoever then swallow down *Holy things*, P. Hof. 7. Psal. 14.4

are the gulfs not only of *Revenues* and *Maintenance*, but also of the *Prophets*, of *Sermons*, of *Soules*, of *Kingdoms*. Let no man deceive you with cunning words, as *salvation* is not without the *Word*: nor the *Word* without a *Prophet*; so, most certain it is; that, there will be neither *Prophets* nor *Schoolers* for the *PROPHETS*, long, without liberall maintenance.

Say I these things after the manner of men? Say not the *Holy Scriptures* the same also? What all *Heathen* writers inculcate, that, *Honour is the Nurse of the Arts*, the same doth St. *Paul*, thrice in a verse, affirme to be the *Nurse of Divinity*. That we must

1 Cor. 9.
10.

plow, sowe, thresh, in *Hope*: that without this *Hope of Carnal things*, we may bid adieu to the harvest of *Spiritual*. K. *S O L O M O N* said, where the *Crib* is empty, the *Oxen* faile.

Pro. 14.4.

He said it for us: who in vaine expect well manag'd *Oxen*, unlesse we store up *Proviender* for them. A wiser then K. *Solomon* said, though not of this matter, yet not beside it, unlesse there

St. Matth.
24. 38.

be a *Carcaß* there will be no *Eagles*. He said it to us, who in vaine expect *Eagles*, if we take away the *Carcaß*. The *study of Divinity* must have its encouragements. For *CHRIST* and His *College* were not *begging Fryers*, as some have determined. No,

S. Joh 13.
29.

but He had a bag, and that so larg, that He could buy with it not only what was needfull, but also give unto the *Poore*. And St. *PAUL* will's that there be an *abundance*, not only in *Almes*, but much more in *Offerings*; (for we must understand him to speak of both, as I formerly acquainted you) *bountifully*, not *sparingly*, not only *supplying want*, but also *abundant*. Besides, he that will have a *Bishop* to be given

2 Cor. 8.

20.

1 Cor. 9.6.

12.

1 Tim. 3.3.

to

to *Hospitality*, as well as *apt to teach* (and indeed if there be any prejudice against it, he puts, in the first place, *given to Hospitality*) would have him to be not only well furnished from his *Study*, for *Doctrine*; but also from his *Chest*, for *Hospitality*. And, lastly, he is of opinion that they wither in the *Faith*, who are so tenacious, such holdfasts. And that, if at any time *their Faith* increase, *our condition* and *fortune* will be mended. The *condition* of the *Clergy* ought to be, such as should be, nearer *Envy*, then *Mercy*. Philip. 4. 10.

Look upon the *Old Canon*. One part of *Consecration* was *Anointing*; another, *Filling of the hand*; and, where the last failes, the first is also wanting. So under H. *Moses*; *Dathan* envyyed at it. The *Levits* must have, *Asuppin*, their gatherings, and, *Parbar*, their store. So under K. *David*. There must be *heapes*, great *heapes*, enough to eate, plenty, great store. So under K. *Hezechiab*. Nor was there ever a merrier world, then under those *Kings*, who have been *bountifull to the Levits*. Nor ever a more dismall face of the *State*, then under those *Kings*, who look'd with a Malignant, envious eye upon the *Levits*. 1 chro. 26 15. 18.

Look upon that *Anarchy* of the *Judges*; See the *Levits* wandring up and downe: the *Reason*: why, their *wages* were *Ten Shekels*. Look on *Saul's* time; the *Ark* was not sought to in those dayes: the *Reason*: why, their *fortune* was to bow themselves for a *piece of silver*, and a *bit of bread*. *Doeg* was in more esteem then was *Ahimelech*. Look on *Feroboam's*. Whosoever would was *consecrated Priest*, even of the *lowest of the people*: the *Reason*: why, the *lowest* are fit enough for the *lowest condition*. And, Judg. 17. 7. 8. 10.

D 2

with

with us, (*Fathers and Brethren*) if we would sing away our paines at so low a price, as some, now they have bras'd their foreheads, sticke not to say, any, that can but *waite a long Gowne*, and *prattly the houre-glasse*, and *huddle out much*, no matter what, to the purpose or beside, shall bee a fit *PROPHET* for Vs.

What remaineth, I shall give you in a word. Consider wee how *GOD*, in the *Prophet Zachary*, Chap. II. V. 12. when hee had thoughts of forsaking *Israel*, forsooke them upon this very point, because they requir'd His paines with too cold and beggerly a reward. Doe you heare? quoth He; if you think good, give mee my price: and, if not, forbear. When they had weigh'd him some money, viz. *Thirty pices*, He, in indignation, flies out into these words; surely, a glorious *Reward*, a goodly price that I am prised at of you. And he broke the *Staff* of the *Pastorall Office*, and made voyd whatsoever good he had purposed to this people. This example was not given in vaine. Believe me, this happens daily to Excellent Spirits, and full of *GOD*, (unless there be perchance one or two, an *Eliad* or *Medad*) who sometimes have these thoughts, and tacitly speake thus to themselves: Alas, this of its owne nature is a *weighty burthen*; but, by the *Pharisaicall* laying on of load, (which yet they touch not with the little finger) is now made *insupportable*; the place is *slippery*, and full of *Cares and Troubles*: Will there be any *Reward*? When they see that men are cold in that point, that they must take paines at a low price, that *insupportable labour* is requir'd, and *Thirty pices* shall be pay'd for all; many who

who otherwise incline to the study of *Divinity*, break their *Staves*, betake themselves to other *Studies*, and fall off from their purpose of consecrating themselves to these *Studies*, and to this *sacred* work.

Which that it may not come to passe; (*Fathers and Brethren*) that there may be no more breaking of these *Staves*, apply early remedies to this disease. Free the *Church* from that *taile of Prophets*, which is otherwise likely to happen; free the *Commonwealth* from these *snarcs* of troubles; free your selves from the bloud of so many soules, which daily perish by *SACRILEGE*. Often urge this *Text*, and others like it. P. Isai, 9.
15.
P. Eze, 34.
18, 20.

I take it for granted, and confessed by all, that a *Learned Clergy* would be an excellent and most desired thing, so we might see grounds how it may be effected. Which that it may be, it seemes to me to be the better course to inculcate *this point* in our *Sermons*, then (*what we have long done with lamentable successe*) to bite and teare one another, while at length we be consumed one of another. Gal. 5. 15.

Vnlesse this be done, truly the *wasts* and *ruins* of the *Church* are manifest: but the *buildings* or *materials* of the building appeare not. I see the *decaies*, and *dilapidations*, but, how they should be *repaired* or *made up*, I see not. I cannot *hope* that things will be *better* then they are: that they will be *worse* then they are, I can *fear*.

I have treated of a Subject, as I often think with my selfe, necessary to be treated of and thought upon. My judgement concerning it, and my selfe too. I, a *Prophet* of the same *Order*, though not of the same *Worth*,

submit.

submit to you who are the *Prophets, and Fathers of the English Prophets.*

The true *Light* of the world inlighten our minds with his light, that we may not only see the vices and corruptions of the present times, and search out the causes of them ; but also that we may dislodg them out of those things which are of greatest moment, and apply our selves with all our might to remove them. Let us, what lyeth in us, make

the *Church* to flourish, and keep it so

being made. Finally, let us reflect

upon *Hierusalem*, as the cheif

of all our joyes, through

I E S U S C H R I S T

our *L O R D.*

Amen.

(* *)

Some beleived the things which were spoken, and some beleived not. Acts. 28. 24

F I N I S.

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